

**THE MINUTES  
OF THE  
WARRANT COMMITTEE MEETING  
JUNE 11, 2003**

Chairman Widmer called the meeting to order at 7:42 PM.

Members absent: B. Hofmann and D. Kobus

Also present: Town Accountant Barbara Hagg, COA Chair Barbara Miranda, Capital Budget Committee Chair Mike Speidel, Attorney Bob McLaughlin, Fire Chief Osterhaus, Selectman Paul Solomon, and Treasurer Susan Kendall Freiner

*Handout(s) given out tonight:*

1. *Article 3 for Annual Town Meeting*
2. *Article 4 for Annual Town Meeting*
3. *New Policy on Use of Municipal Vehicles June 11, 2003 letter from Assessing Administrator Robert Reardon*
4. *Request for Reserve Fund Transfers for Legal Services June 5, 2003 letter from Assistant Town Administrator Joyce Munro*
5. *Comparative Financial Statements for the Ten Months Ending 4/30/03 and 4/30/02*
6. *Town Meeting Motions June 9, 2003 memo from Town Administrator Kleckner*
7. *June's Annual Town Meeting motions*
8. *Town of Belmont Budgets and Reports of the Warrant Committee and the Capital Budget Committee*
9. *COA facts sheet from COA Chair Barbara Miranda*

Chairman Widmer reminded the Committee the last meeting would be on June 25, 2003 at the Selectmen's Meeting Room. Also, tomorrow night is the League of Woman Voters night at the Assembly Meeting Room in the Library. He requested at least one person from each subcommittee attend.

***FY04 Budget Discussion and Other Warrant Articles***

Town Administrator Kleckner ensured each member had a copy of the Annual Town Meeting motions (*Handout 7*).

*Article 15 – Senior Center*

COA Chair Miranda distributed an updated COA fact sheet (*Handout 9*). She reviewed some prior Town Meeting Reports pertaining to the COA. She has been on the Board for the last five years, and in that time, she has done much research regarding building a Senior Center. In 2001, the COA Board chose the Kendall as the best site for the Senior Center. Our decision was to look at a floor plan to meet our needs and it is the Town's

decision to incorporate more in that building. The COA serves 35% of the Town's seniors over 60 years old.

Selectman Solomon informed the Warrant Committee of the Board of Selectmen's vote for a two-story building as part of the motion. Member Brusch added the Permanent Building Committee is requesting an additional \$120K for this part of the schematic level design.

Vice Chairman White asked Selectman Solomon to review their decision to change from a one-story to two-story building. He has spoken with a number of architects, and they have come up with several possibilities for the second-floor. He believes there will be no trouble finding someone to fill that space.

Vice Chairman White mentioned Selectman Brownsberger spent some time earlier convincing him of the need for a one-story building due to the excess space currently in the Town. Vice Chairman White would like to know where this extra space is so that possibly some of that could be disposed of.

Member Hobbs mentioned the possibility of relocating the Historic Society, which is currently in the Library's Claflin Room, to this new building to free up some needed Library space. Member Brusch said the problem with that is they are a private club, so we could not relocate them without creating more issues. Member Brusch could see doing a two-story schematic design for this building, but she does not expect to vote for a two-story building if that space has not been filled when the Town goes for a debt exclusion.

Chairman Widmer asked where the Capital Budget Committee is on this at this time. Mr. Speidel said the Capital Budget Committee is meeting tomorrow night on this issue.

Member Curtis has received calls from his area expressing their interest in a two-story building at the Kendall site. He is not sure the Town will find a consensus on what will go into the additional story.

Member Heigham remains opposed. He cited a few reasons for his opposition: the Seniors presently have a structure, the Senior Center serves only a small percentage of the total residents, and other things such as roads, fire stations, and schools affect more residents. He would like priority given to those things that affect more residents. He does not see spending \$120K for more funds unless there are "seven figures" in private donations to the Town.

Member Callanan asked what is the plan for the Waverley Library Branch when the Waverley Fire Station is closed. Member McCormick said that so long as the Town owns that building, the Library would remain. We need to think creatively about the Waverley building's next step.

Member Oates will not support this for the same reasons as Member Heigham mentioned earlier.

Member McCormick reviewed the annual costs for the branch Libraries. To embark on a new branch at this time, that would not be fully utilized, does not make sense to the Library Trustees. Selectman Brownsberger said the Board of Library Trustees has taken a responsible and realistic position. Selectman Brownsberger has been somewhat skeptical about the second-story use, but there has been some energy from the residents that may result in effective use of that additional space. He feels comfortable about going in that direction.

Member Curtis has not seen a concrete notion for anything that would have any consensus for the Town or the neighborhood. Selectman Brownsberger responded that it binds a lot of people into raising some significant private contributions for this project. We have got a product that we are trying to sell.

Member Bruschi said for Selectman Brownsberger's idea for the private fundraising is for the seniors to raise almost half the costs of the building. It does not compute for her that the seniors should be raising money for the portion of the building that is not to be used as a Senior Center.

Member Schafer is in a quandary. When we look at the long list the Town needs money for, there just isn't that kind of money within the Town. There are two measures: what's the likelihood we can raise money for any kind of thing, and what's "needed" for the Town. She asked Selectman Brownsberger and the Committee if they have a good sense if it's a realistic expectation for private contributions to support this project.

Ms. Miranda mentioned the Friends of the COA is about 400 people within the Town. She thinks the residents could contribute substantially.

Member Stratford wondered the time line for both raising contributions and the starting the building. Member Bruschi said the Permanent Building Committee should have the schematic design on December 1<sup>st</sup>. Selectman Brownsberger thinks the fire stations would be on the ballot on April 2004, with the Senior Center in possibly 2005.

Member Curtis asked if Ms. Miranda has any notion if having a two-story versus a one-story building would affect the senior's contributions. She responded that the two-stories would be more beneficial for fundraising.

Member Callanan said one of the issues discussed with having a second floor is parking. She asked if the Board of Selectmen have discussed the parking issue for the building. Ms. Miranda said we have 40 spaces now. We consider an average of 45 spaces to be needed with additional spaces for special events. It's true you couldn't have a space that would require 25 spaces for the second floor, but there are many other options.

Member McCormick wondered if the School Administration Building personnel could be relocated to this second story and dispose of the Administration Building. Member Brusch answered that question was reviewed a few years ago. There are about 19 personnel currently in the School Administration Building, with only two of those personnel able to be relocated to schools. The other 17 would have to have space for parking. It would just not work out.

Mr. Speidel brought up some questions regarding the building, timeframes, and minimum total contributions needed for this project. Member Brusch does not see the basement as a huge issue, since there would need to be something for the elevator shaft anyway.

Town Administrator Kleckner pointed out there are some differences in the motions (in *Handout 7*) that were mentioned in his June 9<sup>th</sup> memo (*Handout 6*).

With 15 members present, the Warrant Committee took a vote pertaining to Article 15.

- *Chairman Widmer, Selectman and Members Curtis, Hobbs, Stratford, Schafer, Morley, and Brusch voted **to recommend Article 15** to Town Meeting.*
- *Members Flewelling Heigham, Oates, Callanan, Tillotson and White voted **to not recommend Article 15** to Town Meeting.*
- *Member McCormick **abstained** from voting on Article 15.*

#### *Article 16*

Article 16 is a companion article to Article 15. There is a companion article pertaining to the Waverley Fire Station as well.

With 15 members present, the Warrant Committee took a vote pertaining to Article 16.

- *Chairman Widmer, Selectman and Members Curtis, Hobbs, Stratford, Schafer, Morley, White and Brusch voted **to recommend Article 16** to Town Meeting.*
- *Members Flewelling Heigham, Oates, Callanan, and Tillotson voted **to not recommend Article 16** to Town Meeting.*
- *Member McCormick **abstained** from voting on Article 16.*

#### *Article 13 – Fire Stations*

Town Administrator Kleckner said the Town has come up with an Agreement for the Jones property. The nature of the Agreement is the owners would not appeal the amount of taking with eminent domain. The Town would be obligated to assume the liability if the property is contaminated costing approximately \$60K - \$110K. The amount proposed under this Article is \$1,380,000. The Town would be on the hook for relocation expenses of about \$30K, which is why the Article increased from \$1,350,000.

Treasurer Freiner said an option would be short-term borrowing because interest rates for BANs are less than 1%.

Mr. McLaughlin explained the need for the Town taking the property by eminent domain.

Member Flewelling wondered why the Town did not take the VFW site, which they already own. Mr. McLaughlin responded we would need the parking lot next door, part of the PQ field, and part of the tennis courts. It would also require a  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote from the State legislature, and the Veterans do not want to move (thereby lacking support) needed to relocate the VFW.

Chief Osterhaus answered Member Tillotson's concern for taking this property out of the tax base. He said that when the whole project is done, we would be putting three parcels back into the tax base.

Mr. Speidel asked when the Board of Selectmen intended to take the property. Town Administrator Kleckner said there is not a definite date as of yet. Mr. Speidel is confused with the intended order of things. He clarified the Selectmen intend to take this property whether the debt exclusion passes. Selectman Brownsberger agreed. He also would support adding money to this Article for removing the tanks and contaminated soil.

Mr. Speidel would also like to know the source of funds for this project. Selectman Brownsberger said the discussions were to take the money out of the Kendall funds and replace it upon bond issuance. Mr. Speidel gave two reasons for that not to happen. The Committee discussed different borrowing suggestions. The Committee decided to vote on borrowing the funds for this Article.

- *Member Flewelling made a motion, Member Heigham seconded said motion, and with 15 members present, the Warrant Committee unanimously voted **to recommend Article 13** to Town Meeting, including tank removal, **totaling \$1,500,000** for the Article.*

#### *Article 14 – Fire Stations*

The Committee briefly discussed Article 14.

- *Member Heigham made a motion, Member Flewelling seconded said motion, and with 15 members present, the Warrant Committee unanimously voted **to recommend Article 14** to Town Meeting.*

#### *Article 17 – Waverley Fire Station*

Member Brusch clarified whether the Historic Commission has a role in this project. Member Brusch does not want a potential buyer's hands tied by the Historic Commission since the building is more than 50 years old. Member Heigham concurs with Member Brusch, but he would like to vote in favor of this and get things rolling for this issue. Town Administrator Kleckner added this building is not listed as a Historic Building.

Member Oates says the building is in terrible shape. To maintain an envelope on the exterior structure is not worthwhile.

Chairman Widmer said he would like the exact language of this Motion before the Committee votes. Mr. Speidel agreed he would like that as well for the Capital Budget Committee.

Member Schafer would like to have it understood the Town has an interest in protecting the visual ness of this building. She would hope the Committee would give this motion a chance to maintain this building.

Selectman Solomon mentioned this building is a part of this Town's history. He would also like this preserved.

The Warrant Committee decided to vote Articles 17 and 18 on Monday night prior to Town Meeting.

#### *Article 19 – MWRA Loan Authorization Program*

The Committee briefly discussed Article 19. Mr. Speidel asked how the motion was worded. Selectman Brownsberger said it would be a one-time \$650K borrowing.

- *Member Heigham made a motion, Member Oates seconded said motion, and with 15 members present, the Warrant Committee unanimously voted **to recommend Article 19** to Town Meeting as long as the amount is a **one-time \$650,000**.*

#### *Article 11 – FY04 Capital Budget*

Member Brusch reminded the Committee they received the Capital Budget Committee handout at last week's meeting.

Member Schafer asked if we appropriating money to do anything to the Waverley building before we sell it. Mr. Speidel said there is \$300K for the roof repair program. There is also a line item for emergency repairs, in which some will be for the Waverley Station. Mr. Speidel said we are doing the minimum amount possible to secure the building with these repairs. Member Schafer thinks it is ironic these repairs are occurring after the men have left the building.

- *Member Flewelling made a motion, Member Heigham seconded said motion, and with 15 members present, the Warrant Committee unanimously voted **to recommend Article 11** to Town Meeting.*

#### *Article 3 – Sources of the Funds*

With 15 members present, the Warrant Committee took a vote pertaining to Article 3.

- *Member Flewelling made a motion, Member Heigham seconded said motion, and with 15 members present, the Warrant Committee unanimously voted **to recommend Article 3** to Town Meeting.*

*Article 6 – Non-Contributory Pension*

With 15 members present, the Warrant Committee took a vote pertaining to Article 6.

- *Member Flewelling made a motion, Member Heigham seconded said motion, and with 15 members present, the Warrant Committee unanimously voted **to recommend Article 6** to Town Meeting.*

*Article 4 – Budget*

With 15 members present, the Warrant Committee took a vote pertaining to Article 4.

- *Member Flewelling made a motion, Member Heigham seconded said motion, and with 15 members present, the Warrant Committee unanimously voted **to recommend Article 4** to Town Meeting.*

*Article 7 – Contributory Retirement*

With 15 members present, the Warrant Committee took a vote pertaining to Article 7.

- *Member Flewelling made a motion, Member McCormick seconded said motion, and with 15 members present, the Warrant Committee unanimously voted **to recommend Article 7** to Town Meeting.*

*Article 8 – State Chapter 90 money*

With 15 members present, the Warrant Committee took a vote pertaining to Article 8.

- *Member Flewelling made a motion, Member Hobbs seconded said motion, and with 15 members present, the Warrant Committee unanimously voted **to recommend Article 8** to Town Meeting.*

Town Administrator Kleckner mentioned Articles 10 and 12 are being dismissed.

***Other***

**The Warrant Committee will meet Monday, June 16<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm to vote on Articles 17 and 18.**

Member Oates shared her and Member Hofmann’s “disappointment and dismay” at the Vehicle Use decision, especially since one person said they only return to Town for an emergency four or five times a year with the Town vehicle.

Chairman Widmer said the presentation on Tuesday night June 17<sup>th</sup> would be (totaling no more than 30 minutes):

- Overview – Chairman Widmer
- 5-year outlook – Vice Chairman White

- Cost cutting initiatives – Member Brusch
- Health Care – Member Curtis

Member Flewelling made a motion, and it voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:54 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristina E. Frizzell

Recording Clerk